

Wisconsin Black Bear Harvest Report 2005

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Abstract

Wisconsin bear hunters killed 2,645 black bears during the 2005 season. This was 14% lower than the 2004 kill of 3,063 bear. The 2005 kill was comprised of 58% males, and 42% females. The three leading counties of kill were Bayfield, Price, and Sawyer.

Background

Wisconsin requires non-Chippewa hunters to obtain a kill permit to hunt bears in the state. The state was divided into four Bear Management Zones (BMZ, Fig. 1) in 2005, and hunters were required to apply for a permit within one of those zones. Kill permits were distributed through a preference point system giving unsuccessful applicants who applied but did not receive a permit in previous years the first chance to receive a kill permit the following year. Each kill permit allowed the taking of one adult bear not accompanied by a cub or cubs in the specified zone. A permit to pursue bear was available to all unsuccessful kill permit applicants who requested it; however this permit did not allow the killing of a bear.

Wisconsin's bear season has opened on the first Wednesday after Labor day since the 2000 season. The 2005 bear season ran from 7 September through 11 October (35 Days). In the northern 1/3rd of the state (BMZ A1, A, and B), hunting with the use of dogs was allowed during 7 September – 4 October while the use of bait was allowed 14 September-11 October. Hunters in the southern 2/3rds of the state (BMZ C), could hunt the entire 35-day season but could not use dogs. Hunters using neither dogs nor bait could hunt during the entire 35-day season statewide.

Methods

Wisconsin requires non-Chippewa bear hunters to register all bear at a designated WDNR registration station. An upper first premolar is collected at the time of registration for age analysis. Data on bear harvested by Chippewa tribal members on ceded lands were obtained from the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC). All kill data is entered into the DNR-UNIX computer by district personnel and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

Results

A total of 66,811 people applied for 4,708 Black Bear Kill Permits in 2005. The number of applicants increased by 8% and the number of permits decreased less than 1% between 2004 and 2005 (Tables 1 and 10). A total of 4,549 permits were issued to hunters prior to the season.

During the 2005 season, 4,549 hunters killed 2,645 black bears (58.1% success rate), compared to 3,063 taken in 2004. Males comprised 58% (1,537), females 42% (1,107)

of the harvest (Table 2, Fig. 2). The sex was not reported for 1 (0.1%) of the bears killed.

The Northern Region had the highest bear kill (2,105) followed by Northeastern (313), and West Central (227) Regions (Table 2). Most bears were shot in Zone A (887) followed by Zones A1 (727), B (543), and C (488) (Table 3 and Figure 1). The five leading counties of kill were Bayfield (281), Price (208), Sawyer (181), Marinette (160), and Douglas (146) (Table 4, Fig. 3). Black bear kill by deer management unit can be found in Table 5 and Figure 4. A significant number of hunters reported multiple sightings of bears, and several large bear of over 500 pounds were killed.

The number of bear taken over bait alone (1,597; Table 6) was greater than the number shot over dogs (970; includes bear shot over dogs and bait). Twenty-four bear were taken without the use of dogs or bait. Gun hunters took a total of 2,199 bear, whereas archers killed 372; 20 bear were killed with unreported weapon type (Table 6). Table 7 and Figure 5 summarize the historical Wisconsin black bear kill from 1957 to 2005.

Chippewa hunters killed 54 bear in 2005 (Tables 8 and 9); this was less than the 79 killed in 2004. More information on the Chippewa bear kill can be obtained by contacting the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), P.O. Box 9, Odanah, WI 54861.

A total of 971 black bear complaints were filed from April-October 2005. This was down 24% from the number of complaints (1,278) filed in 2004. As a result, 480 bear were captured and relocated from problem areas.

Eight nuisance bear kill permits were issued during the fall of 2005, 5 in Florence and 3 in Langlade County. Four kill tags were issued to each permit holder. Four bears were killed under this permit system, all in Florence County. Five nuisance permits were issued in 2004, with five bears being killed.

Weather conditions were normal (warm, dry, and calm) for most of the 2005 bear season. Large acorn crops in areas of the bear range may have limited bear visits to bait stations during the season. Warm and dry conditions may have hindered hunter's pursuing bears with dogs as well. Still, the 2005 bear kill of 2,645 was 6% above the WDNR harvest goal of 2,500 bears. Overall, weather conditions were good during the season and hunter success was above average. WDNR law enforcement personnel reported very few complaints on hunter behavior or illegal activities.

WDNR established a harvest goal of 2,525 bears for the 2006 season. A total of 4,370 Black Bear harvest permits will be available to hunters to achieve this goal.

Table 1. *Harvest goal, number of permits issued, bear kill and percent success, by zone for the 2005 black bear season.*

Zone	Harvest Goal	Permits Issued	Black Bear Kill	Permit Success
A1	550	790	727	92%
A	800	1,534	887	58%
B	550	712	543	76%
C	600	1,513	488	32%
Total	2,500	4,549	2,645	58%

Table 2. *Black bear kill by WDNR region, 2005.*

Region	Males	Females	Unreported	Total
Northeastern	179	134	0	313
Northern	1,212	892	1	2,105
West Central	146	81	0	227
Total	1,537	1,107	1	2,645

Table 3. *Black bear kill by zone, 2005.*

Zone	Males	Females	Unreported	Total
A1	402	325	0	727
A	532	355	0	887
B	287	255	1	543
C	316	172	0	488
Total	1,537	1,107	1	2,645

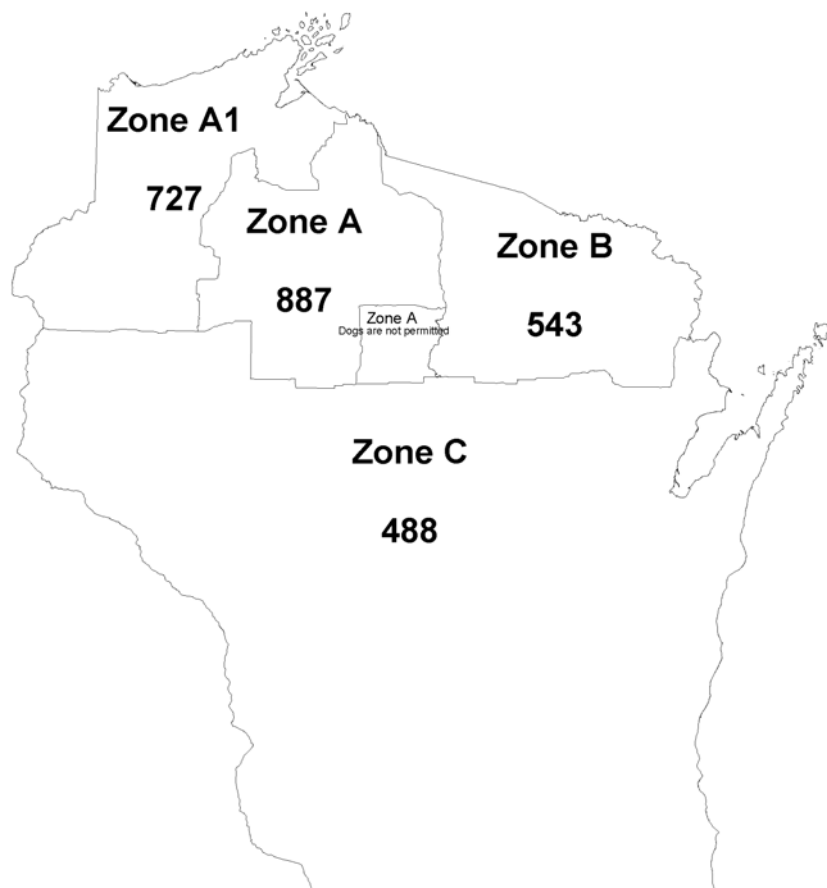


Figure 1. *The 2005 black bear kill by zone.*

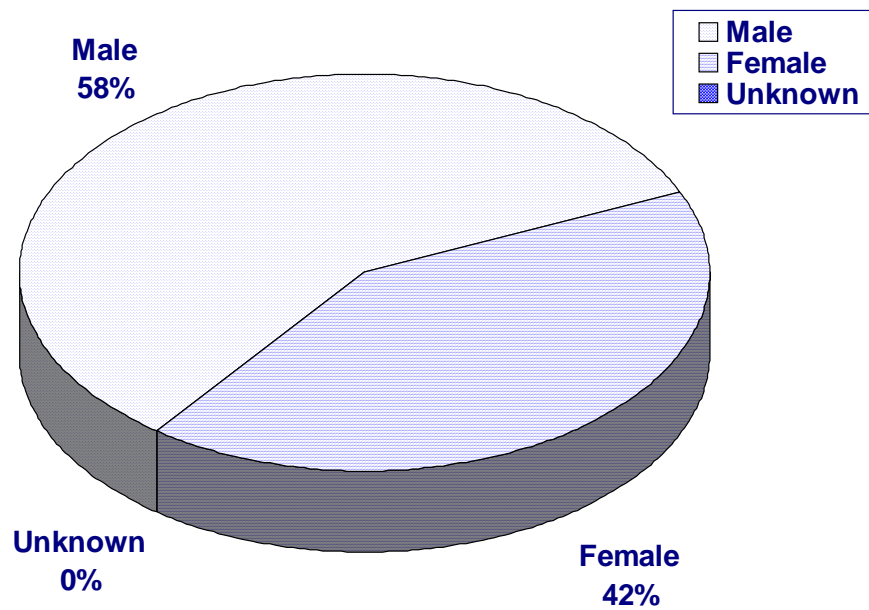


Figure 2. *The 2005 black bear harvest by sex.*

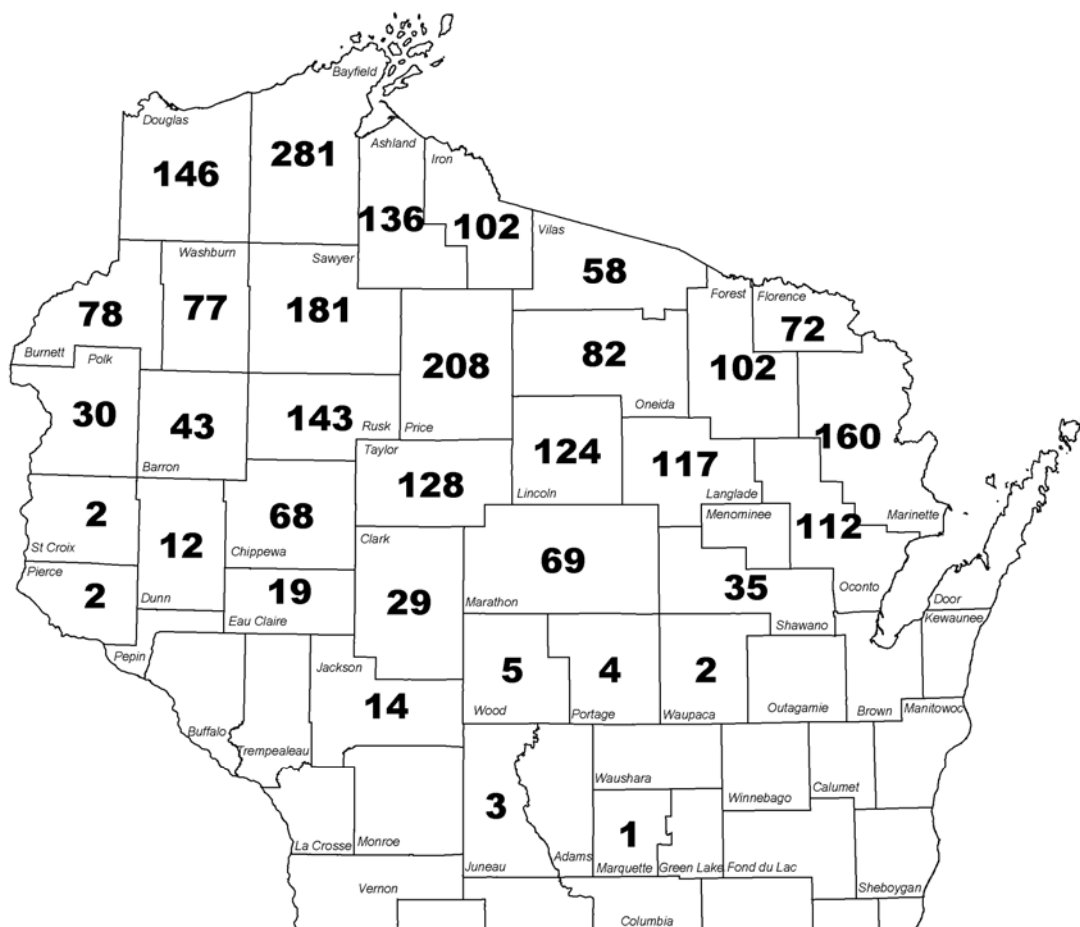


Figure 3. The 2005 black bear kill by county.

Table 4. The 2005 black bear kill by county and sex.

County	Males	Females	Un-reported	Total	County	Males	Females	Un-reported	Total
Ashland	81	55	0	136	Oconto	64	48	0	112
Barron	28	15	0	43	Oneida	58	24	0	82
Bayfield	160	121	0	281	Pierce	1	1	0	2
Burnett	44	34	0	78	Polk	21	9	0	30
Chippewa	46	22	0	68	Portage	4	0	0	4
Clark	17	12	0	29	Price	136	72	0	208
Douglas	70	76	0	146	Rusk	90	53	0	143
Dunn	8	4	0	12	St. Croix	2	0	0	2
Eau Claire	9	10	0	19	Sawyer	84	97	0	181
Florence	33	39	0	72	Shawano	26	9	0	35
Forest	60	42	0	102	Taylor	81	47	0	128
Iron	66	35	1	102	Vilas	34	24	0	58
Jackson	11	3	0	14	Washburn	47	30	0	77
Juneau	2	1	0	3	Waupaca	0	2	0	2
Langlade	67	50	0	117	Wood	3	2	0	5
Lincoln	54	70	0	124					
Marathon	43	26	0	69					
Marinette	86	74	0	160					
Marquette	1	0	0	1					
					Total	1,537	1,107	1	2,645

Table 5. *The 2005 black bear kill by deer management unit and sex.*

Deer Unit	Males	Females	Un-reported	Total	Deer Unit	Males	Females	Un-reported	Total
01	3	11	0	14	37	6	2	0	8
02	54	31	0	85	38	16	14	0	30
03	66	65	0	131	39	25	24	0	49
04	13	15	0	28	40	21	26	0	47
06	58	46	0	104	41	5	5	0	10
07	21	11	0	32	42	28	25	0	53
08	30	33	0	63	43	29	24	0	53
09	42	34	0	76	44	39	15	0	54
10	21	15	0	36	45	45	46	0	91
11	17	11	0	28	46	28	20	0	48
12	18	13	0	31	47	22	7	0	29
13	39	47	0	86	49A	15	17	0	32
14	21	14	0	35	49B	14	4	0	18
15	16	15	0	31	50	30	27	0	57
16	10	7	0	17	51A	19	21	0	40
17	14	8	0	22	51B	34	20	0	54
18	34	30	0	64	52	10	16	0	26
19	54	32	0	86	53	3	0	0	3
20	35	33	0	68	55	9	5	0	14
21	5	0	0	5	56	0	3	0	3
22	19	9	0	28	57	1	0	0	1
22A	12	3	0	15	57A	5	0	0	5
23	49	24	0	73	57B	3	0	0	3
24	20	15	0	35	58	17	13	0	30
25	67	25	0	92	59A	27	17	0	44
26	45	31	0	76	59B	2	0	0	2
27	12	6	0	18	59C	2	1	0	3
28	72	38	0	110	60M	1	0	0	1
29A	15	5	0	20	62A	9	2	0	11
29B	12	7	0	19	62B	4	3	0	7
30	37	19	0	56	63B	4	1	0	5
31	31	8	0	39	67A	1	0	0	1
32	47	49	0	96	72	1	0	0	1
33	18	13	0	31	78	0	1	0	1
34	6	6	1	13	Unk	1	1	0	2
35	17	12	0	29	Total	1,537	1,107	1	2,645
36	11	6	0	17					

Table 6. *The 2005 black bear kill by hunting method and weapon type (does not include Chippewa harvest of 54 bear).*

Method	Weapon			Total
	Bow	Gun	Unreported	
Dogs	23	506	4	533
Bait	334	1,259	4	1,597
Dogs and Bait	14	423	0	437
None	1	11	12	24
Total	372	2,199	20	2,591

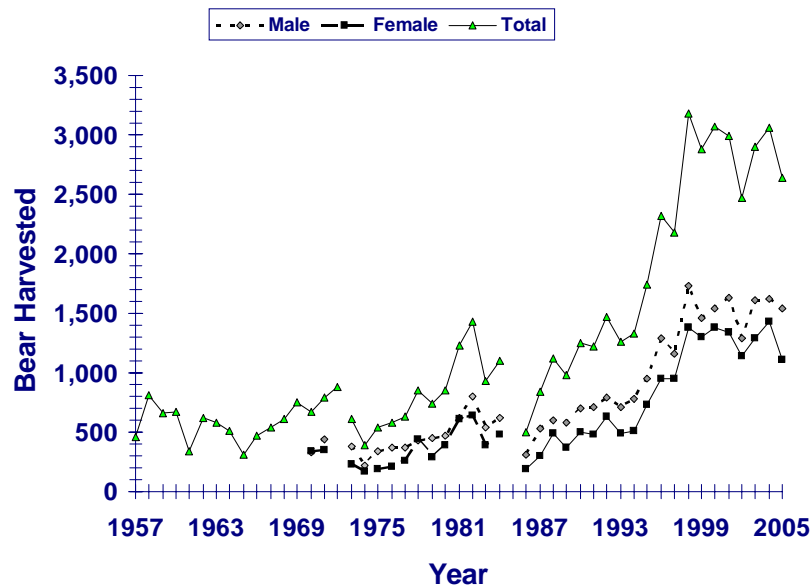


Figure 5. *Black bear kill, 1957-2005.*

Table 7. *Black bear kill by sex, 1957-2005.*

Year	Male	Female	Unk	Total	Year	Male	Female	Unk	Total
1957	---	---		460	1982	797	636		1,433
1958	---	---		811	1983	539	395		934
1959	---	---		665	1984	617	480		1,097
1960	---	---		675	1985	No Season			
1961	---	---		337	1986	308	195		503
1962	----	---		617	1987	533	304		837
1963	---	---		579	1988	601	494	30	1,125
1964	---	---		511	1989	584	375	19	978
1965	---	---		308	1990	705	501	41	1,247
1966	---	---		475	1991	715	480	24	1,219
1967	---	---		541	1992	789	631	54	1,474
1968	---	---		613	1993	715	494	49	1,258
1969	---	---		752	1994	781	513	34	1,328
1970	331	341		672	1995	953	735	49	1,737
1971	444	347		791	1996	1,288	955	82	2,325
1972	---	---		878	1997	1,165	950	63	2,178
1973	376	230		606	1998	1,727	1,378	79	3,184
1974	224	166		390	1999	1,456	1,301	124	2,881
1975	344	195		539	2000	1,543	1,376	156	3,075
1976	373	206		579	2001	1,632	1,336	18	2,986
1977	375	256		631	2002	1,290	1,143	38	2,471
1978	426	436	10	872	2003	1,613	1,288	4	2,905
1979	449	288		737	2004	1,618	1,433	12	3,063
1980	469	386		855	2005	1,537	1,107	1	2,645
1981	624	610		1,234					

Table 8. *The 2005 Chippewa black bear kill by deer management unit and sex¹.*

Deer Unit	Males	Females	Total
01	0	3	3
02	1	1	2
03	5	1	6
05	2	0	2
06	0	1	1
09	1	0	1
10	2	2	4
11	2	1	3
12	2	5	7
13	1	0	1
17	3	2	5
18	1	0	1
19	0	2	2
28	1	0	1
29B	1	0	1
30	1	1	2
31	1	0	1
36	1	1	2
37	0	1	1
38	0	2	2
39	2	0	2
44	2	0	2
45	2	0	2
Total	31	23	54

¹ These data are included in the statewide totals.

Table 9. *The 2005 Chippewa black bear kill by county and sex¹.*

County	Males	Females	Totals
Ashland	0	1	1
Barron	1	0	1
Bayfield	8	1	9
Burnett	4	3	7
Douglas	1	4	5
Forest	6	1	7
Iron	1	0	1
Oneida	1	3	4
Price	1	1	2
Sawyer	1	7	8
Vilas	2	0	2
Washburn	5	2	7
Totals	31	23	54

¹ These data are included in the statewide totals.

Table 10. *The number of black bear harvest permits issued and the number of applicants, 1974-2006.*

Year	Residents	Non-residents	No. Permits Issued	No. of Applicants
1974	3,459		3,459	3,459
1975	4,116		4,116	4,116
1976	4,899		4,899	4,899
1977	5,025		5,025	5,025
1978	6,283		6,283	6,283
1979	5,612	179	5,791	5,791
1980	6,352	171	6,523	6,523
1981	7,247	241	7,488	7,488
1982	8,142	224	8,366	8,366
1983	7,077	218	7,295	7,295
1984	6,439	320	6,759	6,759
1985		Season	Closed	
1986			840	8,289
1987			1,730	10,203
1988			1,663	10,208
1989			2,020	13,734
1990			2,825	15,988
1991			2,560	17,668
1992			2,620	19,415
1993			2,110	22,555
1994			2,175	25,799
1995			2,710	30,086
1996			4,570	35,356
1997			4,700	41,969
1998			5,860	44,928
1999			6,014	50,938
2000			6,598	50,601
2001			5,681	53,508
2002			4,985	54,879
2003			4,710	56,944
2004			4,741	61,726
2005			4,549	66,777
2006			4,370	68,821